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SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE Present State OF AFFAIRS, &c.

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SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE Preſent State OF AFFAIRS, IN A LETTER TO A MEMBER OF THE *Houſe of Commons.*

By a MEMBER of PARLIAMENT.

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SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE Preſent State OF AFFAIRS, &c.

SIR,

I Have taken the Liberty, according to your own Deſire, of giving you my Opinion concerning what will be probably the principal Subject of Debate this Seſſions of Parliament, with my Sentiments on the Points themſelves, as well as ſome Account of the principal Actors on that Stage. This being the firſt Time of your Appearance in that publick Aſſembly, it is highly proper you ſhould be informed of what you are to meet with there, without which you might be liable to make but an indifferent Figure, as well as ſubject to be led into great Miſtakes.

It is now above Thirty Years ſince I firſt was employ'd in this publick Station, and I have conſtantly obſerved that Men undo themſelves at their firſt ſetting out in the World, by running inconſiderately into ſome Party. They often fall into a wrong one, which is moſt likely, becauſe there is always more Art, and more Deſign, in that Quarter, than in the other; and they are then reduced to the melancholy Neceſſity of continuing for ever in the wrong Way, or of loſing their Characters by changing it for another.

To avoid this Inconvenience, you ſhould guard yourſelf, as much as poſſibly you can, againſt the Spirit of Faction, which is always prevalent in a Country of Liberty. It ſpreads itſelf thro' all Ages, and all Degrees of Men; but it is more eſpecially predominant in young Country Gentlemen like yourſelf, that Time of Life being commonly beſt pleaſed with any thing that favours of Oppoſition or Ridicule.

It would preſerve a great Number of Perſons from being ſeduced by this natural Infirmity, if they would conſider, that it may prove of as ill Conſequence to a Nation for ever to oppoſe the Meaſures of a Prince, as to abandon oneſelf entirely to his arbitrary Will. As the latter would infallibly reduce us into Slavery, ſo the former would inevitably plunge us into Anarchy

chy and Confuſion; but the one being too ſhocking for any Man to do, or at leaſt for ſo many as to make it much to be apprehended, we ought more particularly to guard againſt the other, of which we have frequent Inſtances every Day.

It is not at all ſurpriſing if we are, at firſt, apt to conclude a Miniſter to be in the Wrong, becauſe many Men of Diſtinction and ſeeming Merit oppoſe him. 'Till a Man has been ſome time converſant in the World, he will not eaſily be convinc'd that humane Nature is ſo corrupt; he will find it difficult to conceive that we ſhould be capable of ſacrificing our Honour and Conſcience to our Reſentment; but we live in an Age too degenerate for any one to continue long in this Error. He will quickly find there are Men, or rather Monſters, that, muffled in the Cloaks of Loyalty and Patriotiſm, are perpetually watching Opportunities to aſſaſſinate both their Prince and their Country.

The Nature of the Poſt of a firſt Miniſter neceſſarily attracts the Envy of the World; then ſurely a Situation ſo expos'd to the Strokes of Fortune, ſo impoſſible to be maintain'd without diſobliging Multitudes, is very little deſirable; yet we ſee it the Endeavour of every ambitious Man to overturn the Perſon that poſſeſſes that Place, and to come in his Room.

This is almoſt the never-failing End of great Men, and they have hardly any Comfort, but a certain Aſſurance that their Succeſſors will meet with the ſame Fate.

Of this Set of Men there are always a great Number in every Age. In our own we have one in particular, whoſe ſole Aim appears to be, the making himſelf infamous to Poſterity for Malice and Envy; as we have another who prides himſelf in having exceeded any one of his Species in Inſtances of Ingratitude.

On the other Hand, there is a Miniſter, who, if you believe the worthy Gentlemen juſt mention'd, is infinitely a greater Proficient in the infamous Practices that may undo a Country, than all the *Sejanus*'s and *Wolſey*'s in the World together; an Embezzeler of the publick Monies, a Penſioner to foreign Courts, and a Blunderbuſs in Politicks.

But the Misfortune is, theſe Gentlemen do themſelves more Prejudice by theſe Aſſertions, than any Body elſe. They have, in many of their Papers (I need not ſay on what Views) extoll'd the Judgment of his Majeſty, and commended his Affection to his People; How weak muſt it then be in them, to call him a Villain and a Blockhead, who is choſen as the moſt capable and moſt deſerving Perſon, by the moſt honeſt, and moſt diſcerning Prince, according to

their

their own Confeſſion? I am ſenſible they may anſwer, that the wiſeſt Man may be deceived; but then he will not be deceived by a Fool; nor can he be blinded to Faults (if any ſuch there were) which are pointed out in the plaineſt Terms to him every Day.

It is the Property of a wiſe and honeſt Miniſter, to deſpiſe the vain Attempts of this Kind of Men; and knowing himſelf thoroughly attach'd to the Intereſt of his Country, to be without Apprehenſions of any thing they can do to him; and ſo far the preſent Gentleman in the Adminiſtration is as wiſe and honeſt as any one that ever enjoy'd his Poſt —— *He bears them no Eſteem for their pretended Patriotiſm, nor entertains the leaſt Fear of them for their real Malice.*

Every Day produces freſh Inſtances of theſe perſonal Animoſities; and theſe perſonal Animoſities produce freſh Struggles between two Perſons, the one endeavouring to preſerve his Poſt, perhaps only to keep his Enemy out of it; the other with as much Probability contending for it, ſingly with a View of doing thoſe Things truly himſelf, of which he accuſes his Adverſary falſely.

Theſe ridiculous Diſputes would be far beneath our Notice, if the Conſequences of them were not of much greater Moment,

ment, if they were not extremely prejudicial to the Intereſt of *Great Britain*, in the Hindrance they occaſion to his Majeſty's Meaſures both at Home and Abroad. They not only obſtruct the Formation of them, let them be ever ſo prudent, but they have likewiſe as bad an Effect on them when they come to be put in Execution.

Let the Authors on the other Side make as great a Joke of it as they pleaſe, yet I am confident it will appear very reaſonable to any impartial Judgment, that ſuch a Spirit of Contention muſt render us very contemptible to our Neighbours; and that the Meaſures of his Majeſty, tho' they have had as much Succeſs as we could reaſonable deſire (and much more, I am ſure, than we could reaſonably expect, conſidering all Things) yet they had ſtill procur'd us more Advantages, and thoſe Advantages had been obtain'd in leſs Time, and with leſs Difficulties, but for theſe unnatural Diſſentions among ourſelves.

As the Inſtability of Councils in a limited Monarchy is well known to be the only Misfortune attending on it, ſo the contrary is the only Bleſſing of arbitrary Governments. They have the Happineſs of meeting with no Oppoſition in conducting any Affair they engage in, which is ſo neceſſary in Things of this Kind, that bad

Meaſures

Meaſures will often have Succeſs from a brisk Execution of them, when good ones will fail by a faint one.

If our Affairs had gone on in a leſs proſperous Manner, and thoſe Calamities had fallen on the Nation which they only ſay have, and probably wiſh had fallen on us, the Blame, in that Caſe, had been ſo far from lying at that Door where they have laid it, that it had entirely been due to themſelves, who took Advantage of the weak Side of their Country, and let in the Enemy at the Back-door, which they ſhould have guarded with the greateſt Concord and Unanimity.

Their Intentions have been ſuſpicious in this Reſpect: They have been notorious in another. If they gave us Occaſion to doubt their Zeal for the Intereſt of the Nation, by oppoſing good Meaſures, at ſo critical a Juncture, when it had been dangerous even to oppoſe bad ones, they have given us no room to be deceived in their Duty to their Sovereign, by their ſeditious Libels and Pamphlets. They could propoſe but three Things by their Writings; either to convince the King that the Meaſures he had ſtamp'd with his Approbation were weak and dangerous; to convince the People of it; or to convince them both of it. The Treatment they have given his Majeſty is ſo Cavalier, that they could hardly

hope

hope to do either the First or the Last; they must therefore necessarily have endeavoured to effect the Second, which was to make the People believe it; and this they must have done either before they had declared their Apprehensions in Parliament, or after: If before, why did not they apply themselves to the Representatives of the People, in whom the Right of Judging in these Affairs is lodg'd by their own Consent? If after, how dar'd they to appeal from the Sentence of a Court from which there is no Appeal allow'd by Law, and which, if there was, would have Consequences too terrible for me so much as to hint at?

This Privilege, which they have assum'd to themselves, of repining at the Decrees of the Parliament, and of discussing over again those Points which have already been determined by the Legislature (a Thing not even allow'd in the House itself) they have, unjustly, honour'd with the Name of the Liberty of the Press; which being a darling Point with the People of *England*, and consequently a proper Instrument for such wicked Purposes, they have continually, and will, without doubt, constantly represent in Danger; tho' they have no other Reason for their Apprehensions, than what are occasion'd by their being incapable of considering any thing but their own

own perſonal Intereſt themſelves, and conſequently of expecting to meet with any thing elſe in others; but the contrary is ſo true, that neither King or Miniſtry had ever an Inclination to, much leſs a Thought of any thing like it; very far from it: They are as ſenſible of the Neceſſity of it, as the trueſt Patriot can be, and would as much abhor the Wretch that ſhould engage in ſo flagitious an Attempt; tho' at the ſame time, they may poſſibly fear, and, I believe, the Generality of conſiderate Men do, that, as our Conſtitution has been more than once preſerv'd by a good Uſe of that Liberty, ſo it will be ruin'd at laſt by a bad one.

This is one of the Subjects upon which theſe Gentlemen employ their Rhetorick. I ſubmit it to your Judgment who beſt deſerves to be eſteem'd an Enemy to the Liberty of the Preſs, the Perſons accuſed, or the Perſons that accuſe; thoſe that have never yet utter'd one Word which could be conſtrued to that Senſe they are pleaſed to put upon it, and who have, both in publick and private Converſation, expreſs'd themſelves conſtantly to a different Effect; or they who, by a monſtrous Abuſe of it, have endeavoured to render it odious both to the Prince and the People. Surely theſe Men muſt have a very poor Opinion of the Judgment of the Publick, if they could

propoſe Succeſs from this Proceeding: They could hardly hope to impoſe upon any reaſonable Man, a Belief they could not entertain themſelves, without being (what every one knows they are not, and what is hardly poſſible they ſhould be) as Weak as they are Wicked.

I ſhall therefore leave this groundleſs Charge, and proceed to examine another Point which has made much Noiſe the laſt, and will probably make more this preſent Seſſion of Parliament: This is the Treaty concluded at *Sevile* in 1729; and from this Battery they have play'd indefatigably on the Miniſtry. They were very ſenſible that they had the moſt Reaſon to expect to deceive the Publick in an Affair of this kind, as it was what the Generality of Men leaſt underſtood; and as it is the Vanity of every People, but more eſpecially of our own, to be thought knowing in Politicks, ſo they made the greateſt Advantage of that Weakneſs, by appealing to them as the propereſt and beſt Judges: They improv'd a Notion, which probably firſt ow'd its Birth to themſelves, that a Treaty muſt be a bad one, if it adds no new Advantages, no new Acquiſitions to what we had before; whereas Treaties of this Kind are never to be expected but at the End of a ſucceſsful War; they are of a very different Nature in a Time of Peace. In this Caſe,

Caſe, all that Men of Senſe can expect, or Men of Honour and Juſtice can deſire, is to confirm the precedent Treaties, and to preſerve the Benefits you have already obtained from them, by thoſe you make afterwards. I will agree, indeed, that in the former Caſe a Miniſter deſerves to be hang'd if he does not procure Advantages, and thoſe very conſiderable ones, for his Country; which is a Truth that would have ſilenced a certain Perſon of their Party, if he had not more Braſs than another of a different Side of the Queſtion, to whom they aſcribe a great deal.

The Occaſion of the Treaty of *Sevile* was this: The Treaty which was concluded at *Utrecht* in the Year 1713, tho' it put a Stop to all violent Proceedings for ſome time, yet it did not totally extinguiſh all Animoſities between the Princes concern'd in it: Whether it proceeded from a real Want of Judgment in ſome Miniſters, who have ſince only accus'd others of it, or from any other Cauſe (Corruption only excepted, which ſurely it could not be, when thoſe Miniſters have ſince charg'd it with ſo much Aſſurance on the preſent Adminiſtration) I ſay, from whatſoever Cauſe it proceeded, it is undoubtedly certain that there ſtill remain'd a general Diſcontent, which, encreaſing every Day, ſeem'd to threaten *Europe* with a new Flame. This

Misfortune was the Occaſion of the Treaty of *Hanover*, the Quadruple Alliance, with ſeveral others of leſs Moment, and laſt of all this Treaty of *Sevile*, the Subject of our preſent Enquiry.

To ſpeak more plainly to the Point: The Treaty of *Sevile* owes its Being to the Animoſities either rais'd by, or left unextinguiſh'd at the Peace of *Utrecht*, and to an Alliance formed in Conſequence of them between the Emperor and the King of *Spain*. An Alliance, which, as it was highly formidable to *Europe* in general, from the Powers concern'd in it, was ſo much more, to *Great Britain* in particular, from the Stipulations it contain'd, which tended to no leſs than the Loſs of our foreign Poſſeſſions, the Ruin of our Trade, and the Impoſing on us a Sovereign who had render'd (the only Happineſs they propos'd to have left us) our Liberties of no Effect.

This being the Caſe, I think it had ſufficienly juſtified the Conduct of our Miniſters, tho' they had actually done what, in Truth, they have not done; tho' they had enter'd into Engagements in which we were to have born the greateſt Burthen. Our principal Buſineſs was to have broken ſo dangerous a Conjunction at any Expence whatſoever, and to have engag'd, on our Side, ſome other Power capable of reſtoring the Equilibrium which was loſt before;

before; the first of these was effected by the Treaty of *Sevile*, and the latter by the Alliance with *France*, which, as much as it has been found Fault with, was certainly, according to all humane Probability, the only Step that could have sav'd *Europe* from universal Monarchy, or, at least, from a general War.

We will here allow the Gentlemen on the other Side, *for once*, that what they say is true, and that the *French* are a People entirely void of Faith and Honour, totally given up to their particular Interests; we desire no better Argument than their own to defend our entering, at this Juncture, into an Alliance with that Nation. It can never be their Interest to suffer another Power to aggrandize itself, which would not happen but that in the End it must be at their own Expence; and if it does not appear to be their Interest, from their own Principles, we may then conclude ourselves certain of their Fidelity.

What has been already said, will suffice to justify the Ministers in making the Treaty of *Sevile*. Their Adversaries must now confine themselves to find Fault with the Manner in which it was made. There are but three Articles in it that deserve the Attention either of the one Side or the other. It is true, indeed, an honourable Member (as he is pleas'd to call himself) has

has taken a great deal of Pains to make almoſt every Paragraph ridiculous; but it is foreign to my preſent Deſign to take Notice of any thing that is trifling: My Purpoſe is only to give you a general Idea of the Buſineſs you are to have a Share in, and to enable you to make a ſound and juſt Judgment of moſt of the conſiderable Points of it in particular.

The three Articles juſt mentioned, are thoſe which relate to *Gibraltar*; to the Reſtoration of our Commerce in the *Weſt-Indies*, and to the Satisfaction for the Loſſes of our Merchants in thoſe Parts; and to the ſettling Don *Carlos* in *Italy*. The two firſt ſolely concern ourſelves; the laſt (as they ſay) only our Enemies; but of that hereafter.

The firſt is that which relates to *Gibraltar*. This Fortreſs was, almoſt, the only Benefit we obtain'd by the Succeſs of our Arms againſt *France*, and, perhaps, it was for that Reaſon firſt inſinuated to be of ſo great Importance, which, by the by, is ſtill diſputed; but however that Matter is determin'd, there is one Thing certain, that it was not ſecur'd to us in a proper Manner by the Treaty of *Utrecht*, and that the Difficulties the preſent Adminiſtration have met with on that Account, were owing to the Errors (I might call them by a harſher Name) of another, in which the honour-

able

able Member lately mention'd may find one of his dear Friends to have been concern'd.

Notwithſtanding this, both the honourable Member, and his Friend, but more particularly the latter, have been very forward to accuſe the Miniſtry of Negligence in this very Point; tho' that Gentleman would do better to let any thing of this kind entirely alone; yet he would be more excuſable in meddling with any other Branch of Politicks than that which has relation to Treaties.

I beg of you, Sir, to give yourſelf the Trouble of Reading over the Treaty we are now upon; it will be the propereſt Way to acquaint you with the Principles of theſe Men; you will find *Gibraltar* ſecur'd to us, in the very ſecond Article, in the ſtrongeſt and plaineſt Terms that can be devis'd; both their *Britannick*, Chriſtian, and Catholick Majeſties — *promiſing and engaging to Guarantee reciprocally their Kingdoms, States, and Dominions under their Obedience in what Part of the World ſoever ſituate*; before they can prove that this does not fully comprehend *Gibraltar*, they muſt firſt prove it under the Obedience of ſome other Prince, and ſituated in the Moon, or ſome one of the Planets.

But they alledge, That we would have ſpecifically mention'd *Gibraltar*, without which

which our Right to that Place muſt be ſtill precarious, and, conſequently, liable to be again diſputed by *Spain*, upon any new Difference between us: And here they make no Allowance for the natural Vanity and Pride of that People, which it would have been very ridiculous for us not to have indulg'd them in, conſidering ſuch an Indulgence could not in any reſpect be prejudicial to us; and that it could not be ſo, appears very plainly: For, if to render the Guarantee effectual, it had been neceſſary to mention the Dominions guaranteed; Why were it not as neceſſary that *Great Britain* and *Ireland* ſhould be likewiſe nominally inſerted? How could his Majeſty be ſo careleſs with reſpect to *Hanover*, concerning which they inſinuate him to be ſo extremely ſolicitous? But neither the King, nor his Miniſters, have been accus'd of Negligence in any of theſe Particulars.

I could bring innumerable Inſtances of Inſinuations as groundleſs as this; but there needs no more to ſhew the Unfairneſs of theſe Gentlemen, as well as the Weakneſs of their Cauſe.

Let us now proceed to the ſecond Point, which relates to the Reſtoration of our Commerce in the *Weſt Indies*, and to the Satisfaction for the Loſſes of our Merchants in thoſe Parts. Our honourable Gentleman took care always to magnify

theſe Loſſes, as well as the Indignity of the Uſage, neither of which needed any other Colours than their own to ſet them off in a Trading Nation. He likewiſe took as much Pains to convince the Publick, that a Miniſter deſerv'd the moſt ſevere Puniſhments, if he ſhould neglect to procure Satisfaction in this Caſe; endeavouring, at the ſame time, to make the ſame Publick believe, that the preſent Miniſter had been guilty of that Crime; one would ſwear he had thought that none of his Countrymen were able to read; for any Man who can do that, is capable of finding that he inſinuates a palpable Falſehood. The third Article of the Treaty, containing theſe Words —— *His Catholick Majeſty has declared, as he declares by the preſent Article, that he never meant to grant, nor will ſuffer to ſubſiſt, by Virtue of the Treaty of* Vienna, *any Privilege contrary to the Treaties here above confirm'd, viz.* all the Treaties of Commerce, or Treaties of Peace, in which Commerce may be concern'd, antecedent to the Year 1725.

This Article ſufficiently ſecures us all that we can deſire, with reſpect to our Trade, which is re-eſtabliſhed again upon the ſame Foot on which it was eſtabliſhed before, with the ſame Privileges to the Subjects of *Great Britain*, and with the ſame Reſtrictions on thoſe of any other Coun-

try, aboliſhing and annulling totally thoſe Engagements which *Spain* had enter'd into with the Empire, to our Prejudice, in Conſequence of which our Commerce had been greatly obſtructed for ſeveral Years.

As to the Satisfaction for the Loſſes of our Merchants, notwithſtanding the Confidence with which it has been aſſerted that no Care was taken in that Particular, that Aſſertion is ſo far from being true, that nothing (excepting the Hearts of thoſe who pronounc'd it) can be falſer. There are no leſs than five Articles, the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th, which entirely relate to this ſingle Point, and the whole Treaty contains but Sixteen.

And in theſe Articles, Commiſſaries are to be appointed, and the Manner is ſettled for adjuſting this Difference, a reciprocal Promiſe being made in the moſt ſolemn Manner, by the contracting Parties, the Kings of *Great Britain*, *France*, and *Spain*, that Juſtice ſhall be done in purſuance to the Determinations of the ſaid Commiſſaries. Can any thing be more ludicrous than the Behaviour of theſe Perſons, who expect their own bare Aſſertions ſhould meet with more Credit than the Oaths of the greateſt Princes. I know but one thing more ridiculous, and that is, That the ſame Perſons ſhould hope to bring the Publick over to their Intereſts, by doing what would

would be the greateſt Affront to a private Man, by treating them as if they had not common Senſe.

The third and laſt Particular we are to take Notice of in the Treaty of *Sevile*, is that which relates to the Succeſſion of *Don Carlos* to the Dutchies of *Tuſcany*, *Parma*, and *Placentia*, which, it is ſaid, we are very little concern'd in. Nothing can be a better Proof of the Notions of Honour which theſe Gentlemen are poſſeſs'd of, than their aſſerting, that we are under no Obligations to engage in this Affair, when at the ſame time they can't deny our being Guarantees of the Peace of *Italy*, and bound in the moſt ſolemn Manner (if there is any Solemnity in Treaties) by the Quadruple Alliance, to ſee the Succeſſion effectuated. The Emperor, we ſee, has fail'd in his Promiſe; ſo that it is now the Time for us to exert ourſelves to oblige him to it, which was the principal End of our entering into that Alliance. He has ſhewn us plainly, that his Intentions are quite contrary to his Engagements, and that he is determin'd to keep to himſelf and his Family, what, if he had ever a Right to, he has no Right to now, having, long ſince, made it over to another.

The Treaty of *Sevile* is, in a manner, a Tranſcript of the Quadruple Alliance; it

differs from it only in the Change that is made of 6000 *Swiſs* or neutral Troops, for 6000 natural *Spaniards*. However ſmall this Variation may be (and ſurely it does not ſeem much for the Advantage of *Spain* to change the beſt Troops for the worſt in *Europe*) yet it is repreſented a Thing of the greateſt Importance, and higheſt Injuſtice to the Emperor; whereas it is ſo far from being, at leaſt, the latter, that we ſhould actually be juſtified in entering upon a War immediately with him upon this Account, which muſt be allow'd (even by the honourable Member, and the greateſt Champions of Untruths) to be a Proceeding ſomething more violent than that which we have us'd.

As our Honour is concern'd in this Affair, ſo is likewiſe the general Intereſt of *Europe*, and conſequently our own particular one. We formerly oppos'd *France* when they aim'd at univerſal Monarchy, when they endeavour'd to enlarge their Dominions beyond what was conſiſtent with the publick Security, we were never blam'd for this; Why then ſhould we be found fault with for oppoſing the ſame Deſign in the Emperor? Would that grievous Yoke be more inſupportable under a *French* than under a *German* Prince? Whence this ſudden and extraordinary Favour to that People? It is ſomething new, that theſe Gentlemen ſhould be partial to that Quarter. That

That the Emperor's Views are too advantageous to himſelf, to be anywiſe ſafe to us, will need very little Proof. If we conſider the vaſt Extent of his hereditary Dominions, the Empire, and what he has already in *Italy*, we ſhall eaſily perceive, that with this new Addition of Power, he would be Maſter of near one third of *Europe*; and that he wants no Inclination to make uſe of his Power, appears from his Engagements with *Spain* in 1725. His ſole Aim was to raiſe another Monarch out of the *Auſtrian* Family, who, like *Charles* the Fifth, ſhould be, in a manner, Sovereign of the whole World.

But to the great Happineſs of the Publick (tho' to the great Misfortune of ſome private Men) his Majeſty's prudent Meaſures have diſſipated this Storm, and diſpell'd thoſe Clouds which were gather'd by the Ambition of an ungrateful Prince, who owes his Being to that very People he has been endeavouring to Ruin: ſo monſtrous an Inſtance of Ingratitude in him might almoſt, in ſome Degree, excuſe an Act of Injuſtice in us; ſurely then we cannot be blam'd for ſeeking to abridge his Power, by a religious Adherence to our Treaties: We muſt, in our own Defence, and in the Defence of all *Europe*, confine him within theſe Limits which were ſet him with his own Conſent: We are ſtrong in the Al-

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liances we have wiſely procur'd, and in the Power of the Princes engag'd in the ſame Quarrel; but we are ſtronger ſtill in the Juſtice of our Cauſe, and in the Aſſiſtance of the King of Kings.

I have now gone thro', with as much Conciſeneſs as poſſible, the principal Objections to the Treaty of *Seville*. I have confin'd myſelf as cloſely as I could to the Subſtance, and avoided the Shadow. As for all artful Inſinuations and groundleſs Cavils (Arguments conſtantly made uſe of in a bad Cauſe) I have totally neglected them, becauſe they ſhew more the Nature of thoſe who deal in them, than the Nature of the Treaty itſelf, and becauſe you will, very ſhortly, hear enough of that kind in another Place. My ſole Deſign has been (what I hope it will ever be) to ſtate the Matter fairly, and to prove, that our Engagements are ſuch as we were oblig'd to enter into, in Honour, Conſcience, and Intereſt. We ought, therefore, unanimouſly to concur in the Support of his Majeſty in theſe Engagements, and that the more, as we ſhould have been oblig'd to have done the ſame Thing, tho' they had been leſs worthy of our Approbation; for there is a Neceſſity that the Parliament ſhould be very tender in breaking of Treaties their Princes have made, ſince, without it, our Neighbours would have very little Confi-

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dence in our Friendſhip, and never want Pretences for the Violation of their Faith, it being the only Method, in that Caſe, they can take to treat with us upon an equal Foot.

The next Thing I ſhall take notice of is the Affair of *Dunkirk*, which deſerves our Conſideration more for the Noiſe that has been made about it already, than for any that it will probably make hereafter; tho', at the ſame time, we need not doubt, but it will occaſion many florid Diſcourſes, and many unjuſt Reflections againſt the Miniſtry; ſince it is the Cuſtom of the Gentlemen on the other Side, not only to declaim upon any Point as long as the Reaſon for their Declamation ſubſiſts, but as long as their Reſentments endure, which is generally a conſiderable Time longer: Of this we had a very ſignal Proof, the laſt Seſſion of Parliament, in their Conduct with relation to the Affair before us; when (notwithſtanding the Aſſurances of the King of *France*, that *Dunkirk* ſhould be put into the State requir'd by the Treaty of *Utrecht*) they vented their Rage from Three in the Afternoon 'till Three the next Morning, nor were they ſatisfied 'till they had ſacrific'd ſeveral old and infirm Members to their Indignation.

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the little Tricks and Arts made uſe of by that

Party

Party to ſucceed in this Attach upon the Miniſtry. The Secrecy of their Councils, and the Privacy of their Meeting had more the Air of a treaſonable Deſign upon the Government, than an Accuſation of a Miniſter, which is always an Undertaking no Man need to be aſham'd of, when it is founded upon Reaſon. That Cauſe muſt ſure be weak which has occaſion for ſuch Supports as theſe, for Truth can ſtand upon its own Legs, and confides in its own natural Strength.

Their Unfairneſs was as great, as their Management was mean and little. They not only ſurpriz'd the Miniſters by attacking them where they leaſt expected it, and, conſequently, where they were leaſt prepared to defend themſelves, but they likewiſe endeavour'd to hinder them from having a Day appointed in which they might vindicate themſelves, by producing thoſe Papers which were alone capable of clearing their Conduct, at the ſame time preſſing hard, that their own Evidence might be heard immediately; the Deſign of which was very obvious, and calculated only to prejudice and inflame the Houſe in ſuch a manner againſt the Miniſters, that they might be ſent to the Tower, without having Time allow'd them for their Juſtification.

But the Moderation of the Houſe defeated all their Schemes, and a Day was appointed (as it was highly reaſonable there ſhould) in which the Accuſers and Accuſed ſhould debate the Point, without any other Advantages, to either Party, than what the Juſtice of the Cauſe ſupplied; the Conſequence of which was, that the Miniſters clear'd themſelves to the Satisfaction of the Parliament, and made it appear, that they had not been wanting in their Endeavours, to put a Stop to the Reparation of the Harbour of *Dunkirk*, and, at the ſame time, the Malice of the oppoſite Party was unmask'd, and expos'd to publick View.

They ſtill, however, pretend, that the Adminiſtration were negligent in their Duty, and that when they found that no immediate Satisfaction was to be obtain'd from their Remonſtrances to the Court of *France*, they ſhould have inſtantly acquainted the Parliament with it. I appeal to any reaſonable Man (not to the Gentlemen I am ſpeaking of) whether that had been a prudent Step, eſpecially ſince the King of *France* continually aſſured us, that it was not done by his Connivance, and that he would, very ſoon, redreſs the Grievance. Had it been mention'd in Parliament, it had, in Honour, obliged us to have reſented it in a Manner which, perhaps, might have had very dangerous Conſequences, and had

obliged us (in caſe the *French* were as much determin'd to reſtore that Harbour as they have been repreſented) to declare War againſt *France*: How capable we were of any thing of that kind, at that Juncture, I need not determine. Any one that remembers with how much Difficulty the united Force of the Allies withſtood the ſingle Power of *France* in the late War, will want no Arguments to convince him, that *Great Britain* alone could not do it now, when it has ſo many other Enemies to deal with, eſpecially, if (as the Gentlemen on the other Side inſinuate) we are in a worſe Condition than we were before, oppreſs'd with Taxes, and loaded with a Debt of Nine and Forty Millions.

But *Dunkirk* is now once more demoliſh'd: Let me then congratulate the Nation on having procur'd a Benefit of ſo great Importance, with ſo much Eaſe, and without any Expence, which, had we taken another Method, we could never have obtain'd, tho' we had ſacrific'd Thouſands and ſpent Millions: and let me lament the wretched Fate of thoſe unhappy Men who have labour'd ſo long to no other Purpoſe, but to ſhew the World they oppoſe all Meaſures that are advantageous, and adviſe all Meaſures that are pernicious to their Country: And let me obſerve one Thing more to the Honour of *France*, that by their Behaviour

haviour in this Affair, they have fully clear'd themſelves of thoſe Suſpicions of their Fidelity which have been unjſtuly thrown upon them, by doing a Thing (manifeſtly againſt their Intereſt to do) of their own free Will, which no Man of common Senſe can ſay we could have (eaſily, I won't ſay poſſibly) forc'd them to againſt their Inclination.

I now am come to a Subject, which, from the Beginning, has cauſed great Debates, and will certainly continue ſo to do; this is the Maintenance of the *Heſſian* Troops, a Body of 12000 Men in *Germany*, which we have taken into our Pay for ſome Years, ſince our Quarrel with the Emperor: It is repreſented that they are kept up only on Account of *Hanover*, and that this is a Violation of the Act of Settlement; neither of which is true. In the firſt Place, we maintain the *Heſſian* Troops in order to form, in a ſhort Time, if Occaſion ſhould be, a conſiderable Body of Men, in Conjunction with other Troops of our Confederates, to protect thoſe Countries that are our Allies, to preſerve the Neutrality of others, and, laſtly, to cover the *Dutch* from the Emperor, without which, perhaps, they might not be able to keep their Engagements with us. As to the Second, That it is a Violation of the Act of Settlement, nothing can be a more malicious and groundleſs In-

ſinuation. It is very certain, that by that Act the King is depriv'd of the Power of doing any thing of that Kind, but the Parliament never did, nor ever could have deſign'd to take from themſelves that Liberty; and it is the Parliament, not the King, that maintain theſe Forces; ſo that allowing all that can be ſaid, allowing that *Hanover* is the principal Cauſe of this Expence, it cannot, in any reſpect, be call'd a Violation of the Act of Settlement; it may as well be ſaid, that becauſe the King can raiſe no Money without his Parliament, when the People of *England* are tax'd by Parliament, the King is exerciſing arbitrary Power.

But farther: I can't help obſerving the Partiality of theſe Gentlemen, who condemn his preſent Majeſty for doing that very Thing which King *James* the Firſt is ſo univerſally, and ſo juſtly, condemn'd for not doing, I mean the Affair of the Palatinate, which he ſo ſcandalouſly neglected. He was blam'd for not protecting a People of the reform'd Religion, and abandoning a Nation which might have been uſeful in the Empire to the Proteſtant Intereſt. If theſe Arguments were of force againſt the Conduct of King *James*, they muſt be of equal force to juſtify the Conduct of the Parliament now; the People of *Hanover* being a parallel Caſe, or rather ſtill more deſerving

ving our Protection, as the Difficulties they labour under, proceed from our Quarrels, not their own.

I think we have ſo far clear'd the Way in this Affair as to make it evident, that there is a Neceſſity for maintaining thoſe Troops as long as our preſent Differences ſubſiſt, and, conſequently, that it is highly unreaſonable to oppoſe it: If it was objected only, that the Expence was too great, and that they might be ſecur'd, on our Side, in a cheaper Manner, there might be ſome Appearance of Reaſon on their Side, tho' even that has not yet been, and perhaps may not now be poſſible.

This foreign Army has always given great Uneaſineſs, as well as our Standing Forces at Home. The pretended Patriots launch out in the boldeſt Manner upon this Head; they employ all their Rhetorick to convince the Publick, that it is dangerous to our Conſtitution; they bring Examples out of ancient and modern Hiſtory to convince us of what we all know, that moſt free Governments have, with Time, degenerated into abſolute Monarchy, and that one of the Cauſes of thoſe Revolutions is generally an Army; but they are not ſo fair as to own the original Cauſe to be the Corruption and Levity of the People, which render an Army neceſſary; that is the Diſeaſe, this is the Remedy, and tho', without doubt,

doubt, they are both very terrible, yet the Misfortunes that at length fall upon a Country under theſe unhappy Circumſtances ſhould not be aſcrib'd to the Badneſs of the Medicine, but to the Violence of the Diſtemper, which it is not in the Power of Man to cure; for political, as well as natural Bodies, are ſubject to Changes, and have each their Periods.

In ſhort, to be plain, our Country is in this declining State, and we muſt, in Time, expect the ſame Fate that all Governments have had: We are all corrupted and depraved, and we cannot hope to diſperſe the impending Storm; we can only propoſe to avert it for a Time; our only way to do this is to maintain a Standing Force: It ought to be as ſmall a one as is conſiſtent with the publick Security; but we muſt remember that our Neighbours have all great Armies, and that Force is only to be repell'd by Force; and we muſt likewiſe remember that we have a Pretender to the Throne, and a divided People; we cannot therefore have any Proſpect of maintaining ourſelves, at any time, againſt Popery and Slavery without an Army; and we muſt not be uneaſy at this preſent confus'd Conjuncture, if that Army is more numerous than in a Time of profound Peace.

It naturally occurs to me now, to mention the *Iriſh* Recruits; but I ſhall mention them

them with quite a different View, from thoſe who have made ſo great a Noiſe about them. That Affair is quite over, ſo that I need not enter into the Diſpute whether it was juſtifiable or not; I ſhall only infer from the Eaſineſs with which his Majeſty gave up that Point; how little we have to apprehend from ſo gracious a Prince, and to obſerve that our terrible Army has not leſſen'd, in any reſpect, his Compliance with the Deſires of his People.

I have now run thro' all the grand Subjects of Clamour. I have endeavour'd to explain and juſtify the Meaſures of the Miniſtry, and that with no other Intention than to convince you (as I think I ought to endeavour to do, as I am convinced of it myſelf) that their Views are ſolely ſet on the Welfare of their Country, as the Views of their Opponents are ſolely ſet on the Welfare of themſelves. If I have let fall ſome Expreſſions that may appear too harſh, as it is poſſible I may have done in the Heat of my Diſcourſe, I hope you will impute them to their true Cauſe, the Indignation that fires every honeſt Man to ſee the Innocent accus'd unjuſtly, and to ſee that noble Virtue, Patriotiſm, baſely employ'd as a Cloak to Ambition.

I might have taken a great deal of Notice of the Inſinuations of that Set of Men, with reſpect to the Negotiations of the Miniſters

niſters now ſaid to be carrying on with the Emperor, which imply no leſs than that they repent of their former Engagements with *Spain*, and are now throwing themſelves into the Hands of another Power: but this I am confident is falſe; and, were it true, I cannot help obſerving how unfair theſe Men are, who are equally diſpleas'd with the Meaſures of the Miniſters, whether they are good or bad, whether they are ſuch as they themſelves have approv'd or diſapprov'd.

This is a moſt convincing Proof, that they are Enemies to the Man and not to his Actions, which has been always eſteem'd a Sign of groundleſs Prejudices, and unjuſtifiable Reſentments; as Men who are capable of being biaſſed by ſuch Motives, have always been abhorr'd, and deem'd the Bane of human Society.

FINIS.